UGCs instructions against Ragging

† 4360. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the University Grants Commission, concerned with the incidence of ragging, has issued instructions to State Governments and Universities for taking stern steps against ragging and for declaring it a cognizable offence;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the said instructions would come into effect ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI JAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD PATIL) : (a) to (c) According to the information furnished by the UGC, the Commission has circulated the report of the UGC Committee to all Universities for curbing the menace of ragging in educational institutions. The Committee has, *inter alia,* recommended that the Central/State Governments may enact legislation prohibiting ragging in educational institutions; treating ragging as a cognizable offence and prescribing suitable punishment keeping in view the gravity of the offences committed. The relevant recommendations have been made effective from 29-1-2000.

Plight of Bengali Widows at Agra, Vrindaban and Kashi

4361. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have conducted any survey of the plight of the Bengali widows living in Agra, Vrindaban and Kashi;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action has been taken by Government in this matter ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN): (a) and (b) Uttar Pradesh State Social Welfare Advisory Board had conducted a survey in 1998 and its report indicated that more than 5000 widows were living at Vrindavan and more than 1000 widows were living at Varanasi. Apart from the

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.